

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-42 were previously cancelled. Claims 43, 55 and 61 are currently amended. Claims 44-54 and 58-62 are withdrawn. Claims 55-57 is carried forward, all as follows:

Claims 1-42 (Cancelled)

43. (Currently Amended) A method for compensating for at least one of a transverse elongation and a longitudinal elongation of a web of material to be printed including:

providing at least first and second printing groups arranged one behind the other in a printing press in a direction of production of a material to be printed;

providing positioning at least a first forme cylinder and at least a first transfer cylinder in said first printing group;

providing positioning at least a second forme cylinder and at least a second transfer cylinder in said second printing group;

providing positioning at least a first printing forme for mounting on said first forme cylinder;

providing positioning at least a second printing forme for mounting on said second forme cylinder;

providing at least one first print image location of a print image to be generated by said first forme cylinder on said first printing forme;

providing at least one second print image location of a print image to be generated by said second forme cylinder on said second printing forme;

estimating determining an amount of at least one of an anticipated transverse elongation and of an anticipated longitudinal elongation which is expected to occur in the material to be printed, during printing of the material by said at least first and second printing groups, and prior to the actual printing of the material by said first and second printing groups;

applying at least one first print image at a selected first print image location on said first printing forme prior to said mounting of said first printing forme on said first forme cylinder;

applying at least one second print image at a selected second print image location on said second printing forme prior to said mounting of said second printing forme on said second forme cylinder;

compensating for said anticipated estimated transverse elongation of by the web of material by locating said applying of said at least one first print image at said first selected print image location on said first printing forme and prior to said mounting of said first printing forme on said first forme cylinder and by locating said applying of said at least second print image at said second selected print image location on said second printing forme and prior to said mounting of said second printing forme on said second forme cylinder and both prior to printing of the web of material;

providing an image regulator in said printing press;

locating said image regulator between, in said direction of production of the web of material, said first and second printing groups;

operating said at least first and second printing groups and printing said at least first and second print images successively on the web of material;

determining an amount of an actual ~~at least one of said~~ transverse elongation ~~and longitudinal elongation~~ in the web of material occurring as a result of the printing of the web of material in said first printing group;

using said image regulator and deforming said web of material for compensating for said determined actual amount of said ~~at least one of said~~ transverse elongation occurring and said longitudinal elongation in the web of material printed by between said first and printing group groups when said actual transverse elongation is greater than said estimated transverse elongation ; and

providing a controllable printing forme shifting assembly in each of said at lest first and second forme cylinders; and

displacing at least one of said at least first printing forme on said first forme cylinder and said at least second printing forme on said second forme cylinder of said second, subsequent printing group using said controllable printing forme shifting assembly and changing said print image location on said at least one of said first and second forme cylinder in response to an additional actual a further one of said transverse elongation ~~and said longitudinal elongation~~ of the material to be printed when said actual transverse elongation is greater than an amount which can be compensated for by using said image regulator, said displacing of said printing forme using said controllable printing forme shifting assembly being accomplished and transversely to said direction of production.

44. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 43 further including deforming said material to be printed in a wave shape using said image regulator.

45. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 43 further including determining a factor of said transverse elongation as a function of at least one of mechanical elongation and of moisture-related elongation of said material to be printed.

46. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 45 further wherein said factor of transverse elongation changes.

47. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 43 further including providing a controllable drive mechanism for at least one of said forme cylinder and transfer cylinder of at least one of said at least first and second printing groups.

48. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 47 further including determining a factor of said longitudinal elongation of said material to be printed and controlling a phase relation of forme cylinders and transfer cylinders in said at least first and second printing groups as a function of said factor of said longitudinal elongation.

49. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 48 further including controlling said phase relation continuously.

50. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 48 further including controlling said phase relation during a printing process in said printing press.

51. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 43 further including providing a control console for said printing press and controlling said image regulator using said control console.

52. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 48 further including providing a center point on at least one print image location of one of said printing formes and changing a position of said center point using said controllable drive mechanism.

53. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 52 further including changing said position of said center point during operation of said printing press.

54. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 52 further including changing said position of said center point using one of a color tone of said ink transfer cylinder, an arrangement of the printing group with said forme cylinder supporting said printing forme in said direction of production, and said position of said printing forme on said forme cylinder.

55. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43 further including providing a detector unit and using said detector unit for detecting at least one center point of a print image being printed from said at least one first print location and said at least one second print location defined by said at least first and second printing formes on said first and second forme cylinders of said first and second printing groups.

56. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 55 further including using said image regulator for changing said center point.

57. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 56 further including providing a controllable drive mechanism, using said controllable drive mechanism for driving at least one of said at least first forme cylinder and said at least first transfer cylinder of said at least first printing group and said at least second forme cylinder and said at least second transfer cylinder of said at least second printing group, providing a control unit for said printing press and using said control unit for controlling said controllable drive mechanism for matching said center point of each said print image location of said print image with a center point of said resultant print image.

58. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 43 further including at least three air nozzles usable to direct air flow transversely to said direction of production on said product to be printed, and using said ~~said~~ air nozzles as said image regulator.

59. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 58 further including directing a middle one of said at least three air nozzles opposite to said first and third of said at least three air nozzles.

60. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 43 further including an image application system and using said image application system for applying each said a print image ~~location~~ to each said printing forme using a digital data set.

61. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 60 further including providing a distribution plan for creating a print image on each said printing forme, determining a position of said printing forme and using said determined position of said printing forme and applying each said print image using ~~by~~ said image application system.

62. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 43 further including optically detecting and digitally evaluating a print image formed using said at least first and second printing groups.